

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 07489 172220Z
ACTION EUR-12

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, CA
SUBJECT: NEW GALLUP POLL SHOWS QUEBECERS INCREASINGLY
OPPOSED TO UNQUALIFIED SEPARATION

1. ACCORDING TO AUG 17 PRESS REPORTS, NEW GALLUP POLL RESULTS SHOW THAT OPPOSITION TO QUEBEC SEPARATISM GROWING IN CANADA AND MOST OF SHIFT COMING FROM WITHIN QUEBEC. REPORTEDLY POLL, CONDUCTED IN MID-JULY, SHOWS THAT 70 PERCENT OF QUEBECERS ARE AGAINST PROPOSAL THAT QUEBEC SEPARATE FROM CONFEDERATION, AN INCREASE OF 8 PERCENT SINCE LAST POLL TAKEN IN APRIL. 19 PERCENT OF QUEBECERS FAVOR SEPARATION, DOWN ONE POINT SINCE APRIL POLL. 10 PERCENT OF QUEBECERS ARE UNDECIDED, DOWN 8 PERCENT. PRESS REPORTS REACH OBVIOUS CONCLUSION THAT INCREASE IN ANTI-SEPARATIST SENTIMENT COMING FROM AMONG FORMERLY UNDECIDEDS.

2. IN REST OF CANADA, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, POLLSTERS FOUND SLIGHT INCREASE FOR QUEBEC SEPARATION. 14 PERCENT FAVOR SEPARATION (COMPARED TO 12 PERCENT IN APRIL). AT SAME TIME, FIGURE AGAINST SEPARATION HAS GROWN 2 POINTS TO 77 PERCENT.

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3. CURRENT NATIONWIDE FIGURES ARE 75 PERCENT AGAINST SEPARATION (UP 4 POINTS SINCE APRIL), 16 PERCENT FAVORING SEPARATION (UP 1 POINT), WITH 7 PERCENT UNDECIDED (DOWN 4 POINTS).

4. POLL REPORTS INDICATE PRO-SEPARATION SENTIMENT REMAINS

STRONGEST AMONG YOUNGER PEOPLE. IN 18 TO 29 AGE GROUP, 19 PERCENT FAVOR SEPARATION WITH FIGURE UNCHANGED SINCE APRIL. IN SAME AGE GROUP, ANTI-SEPARATIST SENTIMENT HAS GROWN 8 POINTS TO 72 PERCENT. AGE GROUP FIGURES ARE NATIONWIDE WITH NO BREAKDOWN FOR QUEBEC ALONE.

5. COMMENT: PRESS IS FIRST TO GET GALLUP DATA AND EMBASSY HAS NOT YET SEEN GALLUP RELEASE. CONGEN TORONTO HAS, HOWEVER, CONFIRMED BY TELEPHONE WITH GALLUP ORGANIZATION THAT QUESTION POSED WAS SAME AS IN APRIL, E.G. "THERE HAS BEEN QUITE A BIT OF TALK RECENTLY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC SEPARATING FROM THE REST OF CANADA, AND BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY. WOULD YOU, YOURSELF, BE IN FAVOR OF SEPARATION OR OPPOSED TO IT?". QUESTION DOES NOT ADDRESS NUANCES OF SEPARATION WITH OR WITHOUT SOME FORM OF ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION WITH REST OF CANADA, A FACTOR OF GREAT POTENTIAL IMPORTANCE IN MEASURING SENTIMENT IN QUEBEC. NONETHELESS, EVEN WITH QUESTION AS POSED, RESULTS DO DEMONSTRATE NOTICEABLE SHIFT OF FEELING, PARTICULARLY AMONG FORMERLY UNDECIDEDS IN QUEBEC. ENDERS

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